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COULDN'T EXPLAIN.

A Sentimental White Man Tries to Pick a Quarrel with an Old Negro.

A traveler who had read much of the negro, and who had, while listening to negro melodies sung by white men, been impressed with the "darkey's" fullness of sentiment, stood watching an old negro who worked at a country hotel.

"How do you do?" said the white man, bowing with a sort of tender and sympathetic politeness.

"How does I do?" replied the old fellow.

"Yes."

"Wall, I does 'bout de bes' I ken, sah."

"I mean how is your health?"

"Sorter slow at de present. Ain't been all right in mer health fur several days. Went de uder day whar er frien' o' mine killed haugs an' I stood roun' de fire, roastin' haug melts on de hot rocks an' eatin' em, I did, till da made me sick. It ain't gwine do fur er ole man ter ack like er boy, sah; ain't gwine ter do er tall. W'y, w'en I wuz er boy I uster go ter er haug-killin' an' eat all day laung. Uster chaw, I did, till I couldn' hardly shet mer mouf w'en I opened it."

"A simple child of nature," mused the traveler, "an instrument upon which the skilled politician may play the tune of his unscrupulous improvisation." Then addressing the old negro the sympathetic traveler added: "You love poetry, do you not?"

"O, yas, sah, yas; likes any thing dat's good ter eat."

"You don't understand. Poetry is not to eat. You can drink——"

"Suthin' ter drink? Hits me now, yer does. When it comes ter suthin' ter drink, w'y, my top-not stan's up like er rooster's. W'ar's de bottle? Show me de bottle of yer wants ter see me bite de nalk off."

"You still misunderstand me, and in truth, I do not see how I am to enlighten you. Poetry—and I wish now that I hadn't mentioned it—is nothing to eat or drink——"

"Suthin' to w'ar, den, eh? Wall, I like ter dress up ez much ez anybody. Jes mix some red in er suit o' cloze an' I'm dar, I tell yer."

"Just keep quiet now until I explain myself. Poetry is the music of——"

"Music! Now I got yer—got yer dis time, sho. Music—w'y, bless yer life, chile, I'se er fiddler frum de ole house. I'se made all dese yere folks roun' yere shake do hoofs at dances, I tell yer. I'se got er ole fiddle dat'll take de gout an' rheumatiz outen er foot in two minits."

"I am determined to make you understand me. Poetry—and when I explain it I know that you will acknowledge its influence—is a revival of a feeling which you have felt before, a feeling brought up by certain words, whose tenderness, like the falling of teardrops, brings glimpses of your own soul——"

"Look yere, Mister, I'se er peaceable man, I is, an' I'se been here too laung fur er passon ter come roun' talkin' ter me dat way. You talk ter me like I'so been stealin' suthin,' talks ter me like dat jedge done ober yander in de cou't-house, an' I wants yer ter un'erstan' dat I'se er man dat 'tends ter mer own bisness. I come ont yere ter scou' dis flo' an' not be slan'ered, sah."

"Poor, deluded——"

"Who's er 'luded? Call me er 'luded ergin an' I'll hit yer wid dis wet rag. Go on outen yere, now, ur I'll call de boss. Come huntin' me up w'en I wan't doin' nothin' ter you an' callin' me er 'luded. You's er 'luded yerse'f, sah; you's er blame son o' er 'luded, dat w'at yer is. No, sah, no; doan stop ter say ernuder word. Dat's right, move on. Huh, imperdest man I ober seed. Come down yere tryin' ter raise er row an' I lay he gets it."—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

BOARDING SCHOOLS.

How Girls Are Benefited by Attending Institutions of This Kind.

"Shall we send the girls to boarding-school?" Well, that depends a good deal upon where the girls live and what their temperaments are. If the home of the young lady under consideration is in the country or some small village, there are reasons besides the superior advantages for a book education why it is best to send her away to school. Contact with other minds and individuals besides the narrow circle which such places afford furnishes a valuable part of the education which is to fit the young girl to be a woman. Going away to school is not going to make smooth all the rough places, but it goes a long distance toward giving a young girl a certain self-reliance and confidence, which are the best possible cures for awkwardness. In the narrow circle of relatives and intimate friends she feels that she is understood and judged kindly. The moment she is set out among strangers she says to herself: "What do they think of me?" The constant reiteration of this question causes embarrassment and awkwardness. If she is sent among people without any of her own family to fall back upon she must stand upon her own merits, and she will find that in the main people are much kinder than she gave them credit for.

By all means let the school be carefully chosen. In a good school the young girl, besides her studies and contact with people, learns system, and comes under a discipline which is good for her. The meals are regular, the sleep is regular, and a certain amount of exercise is insisted upon. To the girl who has been rather "spoiled" at home and allowed to retire at one or two, rise at ten or eleven, and subsist on fruit cake and pickles, never walking over two blocks if she can help it, such a change is highly desirable. Something to do every day, and a stated time to do it in, with obligations which must be met, is a discipline which, even if not kept up, is invaluable.—*Detroit Tribune.*

—"Where is your home?" asked a man of a disconsolate-looking stranger. "I haven't any home at present," was the reply. "My wife's mother is making her a visit."—*Sommerville Journal.*

—If a man really desires to discover how popular he is as a speaker, let him charge fifty cents admission.—*Boston Globe.*

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

—A Newburg (N. Y.) firm is building 100 lawn mowers to fill an order from India.

—The industry of extracting oil from cedar boughs is growing to large proportions in Maine.

—The saw-mills of Maine now ship great quantities of baled sawdust to the market, where it is sold for packing purposes and for bedding purposes.

—It appears, from an article in a French scientific journal, that analyses have been made of articles found in Egypt which show that bronze was in use in that country more than two thousand years before the Christian era.

—A great international exhibition of science and industries will be held next year at Brussels, Belgium, commencing on the first Saturday in May and closing November 3.

—What is expected to be the second largest bagging and cordage factory in the United States is soon to be located in Galveston, Tex. It will contain fifty looms, and most of the machinery will be obtained from this country, although the spinning and carding machines will come from England.

—It is believed by a writer for the *Lancet* that somnambulism is in many instances occasioned by worry and distress of mind, and the action consequent thereon; "some of our actions often becoming by practice so nearly automatic that partial sleep or stupor does not arrest their unconscious performance."

—A long continued series of observations, made both at Paris and Munich, indicate that the sanitary condition of a locality depends on its volume of ground water; that is, on the amount of water contained in the ground. It is stated that "the years in which there has been a large quantity of ground-water present have invariably been the healthiest years, while those in which there has been a small quantity have invariably been the most unhealthy periods."—*N. Y. Ledger.*

—According to Professor S. P. Langley, the well-known American astronomer, the temperature of the sunlit surface of the moon has been commonly over-estimated, and probably does not exceed fifty degrees centigrade. Mr. Richard A. Proctor, in his elaborate work on the moon, says that, during the lunar day, the surface of the moon burns, one may almost declare, with a heat of some five hundred degrees Fahrenheit, if the inferences of our most skillful physicists and the evidence obtained from our most powerful means of experiments can be trusted.

—Chemically considered, man is composed of thirteen elements—five being gases and eight solids. In a man weighing 154 pounds, the oxygen, according to French authority, weighs 97 pounds, chlorine about 26 ounces, and fluorine 3½ ounces. He is therefore made up chiefly of gases, which in a free state would occupy about 4,000 cubic feet of space. Carbon and calcium represent the bulk of the solids; the phosphorus, sulphur, potassium, sodium, and iron weighing only from 1½ to 26 ounces each.—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

—The shipments of iron ore from the Lake Superior ports during the season just closed aggregate 4,372,167 tons, as compared with 3,443,672 tons in 1886. By ranges the shipments have been as follows: Marquette range, 1,755,754 tons; Menominee range, 1,132,611 tons; Gogebic range, 1,091,335 tons; Vermilion range, 390,467 tons. The Marquette *Mining Journal* presents a statement of the shipments by lake from twelve of the larger producers among the mines of the Marquette, Menominee and Gogebic ranges, total being 2,377,166 gross tons.

—German scientists are studying the boomerang with a view of discovering the secret of its curious course of flight. At an exhibition of boomerang throwing, at Munster, by a party of native Australians, some extraordinary facts were developed. The boomerang was jerked up into the air, and when it had ascended about a hundred yards it flew away in a straight line, then turned to the left and returned in a curved line back to the thrower, whirling around constantly and whizzing unpleasantly. One boomerang, owing to some fault in the thrower, went astray, and "coming in contact with a spectator's hat, cut it in two as cleanly as a razor could have done." This alarmed the scientists, as it was seen that any one of them might possibly have his head taken off by a misdirected boomerang.—*N. Y. Ledger.*

ANALYSIS OF A TEAR.

Things Which Make a Dewdrop Upon a Woman's Cheek.

The principal element in the composition of a tear, as may readily be supposed, is water. The other elements are salt, soda, phosphate of lime, phosphate of soda and mucus, each in small proportions. A dried tear seen through a microscope of good average power presents a peculiar appearance. The water, after evaporation, leaves behind it the saline ingredients, which amalgamate and form themselves into lengthened cross lines, and look like a number of minute fish bones. The tears are secreted in what are called the "lachrymal glands," situated over the eyeball and underneath the lid. The contents of these glands are carried along and under the inner surface of the eye-lids by means of six or seven very fine channels, and are discharged a little above the cartilage supporting the lid.

The discharge of tears from the lachrymal glands is not occasional and accidental, as is commonly supposed, but continuous. It goes on both day and night—though less abundantly at night—through the "conduits," and spreads equally over the surface of the pupil, in virtue of the incessant movement of the lids. After serving its purpose, the flow is carried away by two little drains, situated in that corner of each eye nearest the nose—into which they run—and called the "lachrymal points." The usefulness of this quiet flow of tears, to both men and beasts, is manifest. There is such an immense quantity of fine dust floating in the air and constantly getting into the eyes, that, but for it, they would soon become choked. Very little is requisite to keep the ball free, and when some obnoxious substance—smoke, an insect or the like that affects the nerves—does make its way in, an increased flow is poured out to sweep it away.—*London Queen.*

EFFECT OF CITY LIFE.

The General Physical Deterioration of Town Populations.

It is generally recognized that the effect of town life upon the physique is not beneficial, and as the population of boroughs has now exceeded that of the country, the fact becomes one worthy of our attention. The great and rapid increase of large towns at the present time adds to the importance of the subject and deepens its gravity. Of old there were but few large towns in our modern sense of a "large" town; but Lugol, the great French authority on "scrofula," noted how the population of Paris deteriorated, and how scrofulous were the third generations of persons who came in from the country perfectly healthy. Other observers have noticed the bad effect of town life elsewhere. And the recent researches of Mr. James Cantlie have demonstrated the rarity of a pure-bred Cockney of the fourth generation. Of old the Baron lived in his castle, while the populace lived around in villages of limited size. For men of all conditions of life the one thing to be coveted above all others was physical prowess. For work, for war, for games, which were largely mimic war, bodily strength was essential. No courage, no skill, could effectually compensate for the want of thews and sinews. Work, war, sports, revels, all, too, were conducted in the open air. But civilization brought about changes profoundly influencing the life of the individual. The development of commerce entailed the growth of towns, and then it was found that in the new struggle for existence the battle went rather to the man with the active brain than to the man with a massive frame-work. The active brain became now the one great thing to be coveted, rather than physical prowess. The tendency of town populations is to dwindle, and this dwindling is seen markedly in the feeble digestive capacity of town-dwellers. They can not eat the pastry, the piecrust, the cakes, which form so large a portion of the dietary of their country cousins. If they attempt these articles of food they give themselves the stomach-ache. Consequently they live on such food as they can digest without suffering—bread, and fish, and meat; above all the last—the sapid, tasty flesh of animals, which sits lightly on the stomach and gives an acceptable feeling of satiety, so pleasant to experience. The town-dweller, in his selection of food, is guided by his feelings; he avoids what is repugnant to him. Such selection is natural and intelligible, but it is fraught with danger all the same. Pulmonary phthisis and Bright's disease seem Dame Nature's means of weeding out degenerating town dwellers. The offspring of urban residents are another race from their cousins who remain in the country. The latter are large-limbed, stalwart, fair-haired Anglo-Danes, while their urban cousins are smaller, slighter, darker beings, of an earlier and lowlier ethnic form, and resembling the Celto-Iberian race. And amid this general reversion we can recognize a distinct liver-reversion to the early primitive uric acid formation of the bird and reptile. A recognition of these facts must lead to such modifications of the food-customs of town-dwellers as are indicated. The spread of teetotalism and vegetarianism tells of a dark groping in the right direction in blind obedience to the law of self-preservation. There must also follow some modification of the existing system of education, for it is by the imperfectly-nourished town child that the weight of the burden of education is most acutely felt.—*Summary of a paper by Dr. Fothergill, in Nature.*

Story of an Auctioneer.

A rather good anecdote is told of Pillet, a typical Parisian, who has just died. M. Pillet had been for long years the chief commissaire-prisour, or auctioneer and valuer, at the celebrated saleserooms in the Rue Drouot. Much valuable property, in the shape of pictures, bronzes, tapestry and artistic upholstery generally, from the precious heirlooms of Princes to the rococo rubbish of actresses, had passed under his hammer. It is related that on one occasion he had a painting on his hands which no bidder would ever venture to buy. Worn out with expending his exertions over the unsalable article, Pillet at last shouted out in desperation one day: "Here, ladies and gentlemen, is a painting which has been for the last five hundred years attributed to the great Raphael without his ever protesting!" The article was instantly knocked down to an honest provincial collector for the sum of $100, and M. Pillet descended from his rostrum relieved of a long-borne burden.—*Paris Letter.*

The Pope as a Gardener.

The Pope has strong horticultural tastes and planted the Vatican garden with fruit trees and vines as soon as he assumed the Papal tiara. He takes especial interest in viniculture, but for some reason or other the vines would not yield until this year, when, for the first time, four casks of wine have been made from the Vatican crop. Every day during the vintage his Holiness came down into the garden and watched the process, showing by his sensible orders that he understood the system thoroughly.—*London Court Journal.*

—Argand, a poor Swiss, invented a lamp with a wick fitted into a hollow cylinder, up which a current of air was permitted to pass, thus giving a supply of oxygen to the interior as well as the exterior of the circular frame. At first Argand used the lamp without a glass chimney. One day he was busy in his work-room, and sitting before his burning lamp. His little brother was amusing himself by placing a bottomless oil flask over different articles. Suddenly he placed it upon the flame of the lamp, which instantly shot up the long, circular neck of the flask with increased brilliancy. It did more, for it had flashed into Argand's mind the idea of the lamp-chimney, by which his invention was perfected.